

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**BALANCING U.S. INTERESTS AMIDST  
THE INDIA AND PAKISTAN CONFLICT**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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This research paper will examine the character of the historic and ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan and the historic US dealings between the countries. As well, it will examine US interests both in this region and globally as affected by this region. From this examination, and from expected long term developments in the world position of these nations (across Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic spheres), the paper will recommend strategy options for safeguarding US interests in this region. (This includes potential actions that may mitigate the conflict itself.)



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## **BALANCING U.S. INTERESTS AMIDST THE INDIA AND PAKISTAN CONFLICT**

South Asia, in particular India and Pakistan, involves many U.S. interests from security (as a region rife with conflict involving two nuclear powers) to economic (as a growing industrial community) to humanitarian (as a region of frequent oppression, suffering, and extreme poverty). The U.S. has been less than fully successful in the past in engaging with either Pakistan or India to enhance these interests. Safeguarding U.S. interests in both India and Pakistan requires the U.S. to cultivate negotiated settlements to regional conflict, build balanced bilateral relations with both states, and engage across the region.

To pursue this strategy, the U.S. must understand and address regional threats, challenges, and opportunities within the context of Indian and Pakistani historic conflicts and internal troubles. The U.S. then needs to examine its interests and regional strategic objectives, its available means, and the success or failure of past strategies. With this examination in mind, the U.S. should consider its courses of action, of which the most successful will be cultivated negotiations, balanced bilateral support, and sustained regional engagement.

### **BACKGROUND**

Determining U.S. interests and regional strategic objectives requires understanding the regional threats, challenges, and opportunities. These issues shape U.S. concerns in the region and will ultimately shape potential courses of action as well. This section briefly reviews the threats to the U.S. from the South Asian region (with a focus on India and Pakistan), overviews the challenges of operating in harmony with both Indian and Pakistani interests, and identifies the opportunities this region presents.

### **THREATS**

The South Asia region contains several threats to the U.S. and its citizenry to include current disputes (representing past and potential future hostilities), internal unrest and insurgency, terrorism, drug trade, and nuclear escalation with its attendant arms race. These threats endanger U.S. interests and complicate the U.S. options to enhance relations in the region. The following paragraphs discuss each.

The Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan is the centerpiece of regional conflict. Involving more than just the disposition of this small territory, the conflict threatens to draw the region into full-scale war. The Kashmir dispute has erupted into open war in the past and has led to almost annual cross border skirmishes for the last 55 years.<sup>i</sup> Since Pakistan has ceded a



portion of Kashmir to China in 1963<sup>ii</sup> and India lost control of a portion of Kashmir to China in a 1962-1964 border war,<sup>iii</sup> any further eruption of hostilities could threaten to embroil China as well. China would add a third nuclear entity and the largest regional conventional force to the fight, threatening major regional instability, economic crises, and potential nuclear confrontations. Water rights and other border disputes<sup>iv</sup> further complicate relations between India and Pakistan. India's involvement with the East Pakistani civil war, the Sri Lankan terrorists, and in the Maoist insurrection in Nepal, has inspired fear in the nearby states fear that India's 'one-India' identity involves uniting a 'Greater India' (to include Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and even Pakistan).<sup>v</sup> A major conflict in the future concerning perceived 'Indian-Imperialism' could threaten to draw the region into war.

India and Pakistan suffer from internal unrest that inhibits internal stability and threatens civil war. Both states have multi-ethnic populations, many of which profess separatism and even contempt for their parent state.<sup>vi</sup> From Sikh unrest in the Punjab<sup>vii</sup> to the Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur independence movements<sup>viii</sup> to northern Maoist insurrections,<sup>ix</sup> India faces destabilizing conflict across its territories. Pakistan, too, faces internal unrest from separatists in such communities as the Sindh,<sup>x</sup> Pushtuns in western Pakistan, and radical Islamists in remote Waziristan.<sup>xi</sup> These internal conflicts threaten the internal stability of these states and, in the case of Pakistan, the stability of the regime. As well, the internal conflicts could potentially spill into other states in the region. For example, in the mid 1980s, India claimed Pakistan supported a Sikh Punjab uprising. This belief resulted in military operations along the border of Pakistan, drawing out the Pakistan forces in a face-off.<sup>xii</sup> Thus a civil conflict does not just threaten the stability of one state, but also that of all South Asia.

Internal unrest can affect regional stability without involving hostilities. India, in particular, is experiencing a rising regionalization of its government. In the 2004 elections, regional parties earned almost half the popular vote, while national parties dropped in power. Dr. Walter Anderson, former chief of the U.S. State Department's South Asia Division in the Office of Analysis for the Near East and South Asia, has assessed that:

This trend has the potential for forging a powerful new force in Indian politics, particularly since regional parties have proven to be as cohesive as any party in India. The causes of this cohesion include the smaller regional setting in which the regional parties operate and their dependence on the loyalty of certain social categories. A strong social basis exists behind most regional parties. For example, caste loyalty has had strong influence on party loyalty and has helped a number of regional parties gain influence. In conclusion ... the elections marked a clear manifestation of the trend toward decentralization.<sup>xiii</sup>

This trend toward regional parties and coalition politics affects India's relations in the region. Ambassador Karl Inderfurth, former Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, predicts a cooling period in relations with the U.S.<sup>xiv</sup> Mr Stephen Cohen, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, predicts that forces in Pakistan would perceive a more chaotic India and an example of Indian weakness. He suggests that to preempt potential Indian negotiations with Kashmiri Muslims to establish a regional division of power, these Pakistani forces might renew support to violent separatists.<sup>xv</sup> Thus, an election and shift in political power could both encourage hostilities while diminishing the effectiveness of U.S. efforts.

India and Pakistan suffer internal terrorism and harbor foreign terrorists. Internal terrorism provides more than just a destabilizing influence; it can spark war and threaten such distant nations as the U.S. The 2001 crisis between India and Pakistan began when radical Islamist terrorists (based out of Pakistan) attacked the Indian Parliament in New Delhi.<sup>xvi</sup> Of greater international threat, though, is the refuge that foreign terrorists find in the remoter areas of both states. The Maoists plaguing Nepal have found sanctuary across the Indian border.<sup>xvii</sup> In the 1980s, the Tamil Tigers attacking Sri Lanka found refuge and support in India. The greatest threat to the U.S. is the continued presence of the Al-Qaida in Pakistan, whose global activities threatens stability of all nations.<sup>xviii</sup>

South Asia is a major source of illicit drugs threatening the world community. The CIA states that India is the "world's largest producer of licit opium ... but an undetermined quantity of opium is diverted to illicit international drug markets; [it is a] transit point for illicit narcotics produced in neighboring countries; ...[and] vulnerable to narcotics money laundering."<sup>xix</sup> Similarly, the CIA states that Pakistan is a "key transit point for Southwest Asian heroin bound for Western markets" and is a center for "financial crimes related to drug trafficking, terrorism, corruption, and smuggling."<sup>xx</sup> This drug traffic and its related corruption both destabilize the region as well as directly threaten the U.S. (given the drugs are "bound for Western markets"). It destabilizes the region by suppressing legitimate economical growth and fostering further criminal activity. This criminal activity can become a source of political power that will both destabilize the legitimate governments and spread instability across the region, much as the FARC has done in Columbia or the Tamil Tigers did in Sri Lanka. Finally, it threatens the U.S. (and the West) by contributing to the drug flow that endangers our citizens and funds domestic criminal activity.

Finally, nuclear arsenals have complicated relations between India and Pakistan by threatening to ignite an arms race by complicating minor conventional clashes and/or magnifying proliferation concerns. RAND suggests the 1999 crisis taught the belligerents the

necessity for an arms race – Pakistan learned that it “may require the largest, most diversified, and most effective arsenal possible ...” for early use in conventional crises<sup>xxi</sup> and India learned it must develop “rapid-response capabilities primarily for shoring up deterrence.”<sup>xxii</sup> This arms race destabilizes the region and threatens the world because the belligerents appear to view nuclear weapons as a viable alternative to continued conventional clashes. Should a crisis erupt, Pakistan’s conventional inferiority may lead to an escalation that will impact lives across South Asia, and the physical and economic well-being of the world.<sup>xxiii</sup> As well, the financial crises of Pakistan and the immaturity of both programs conspire to provide questionable security for the nuclear arsenals and a chance for nuclear mistakes. Cordesman states “in theory, such weapons are ... under tight security ... in practice, no one knows if the Pakistani assurances relating to such weapons are true.”<sup>xxiv</sup> The U.S. cannot be sure that nuclear technology will not proliferate across borders into such regions as Afghanistan, Iran, Burma ... or even to non-state actors such as terrorists or international criminals. Indeed, the proliferation network of A.Q. Khan, former director of the Pakistani atomic research lab, apparently transferred technology to Iran, North Korea, and Libya, and belies such assurances.<sup>xxv</sup> Thus, these developments magnify the dangers of even minor border skirmishes. In the 2001 crisis, the U.S. launched a “frenzy of high-level activity of diplomatic activity to prevent war” even though observers have suggested the military posturing of both states were more for international attention than for war.<sup>xxvi</sup> Thus, the regional disputes over a small territory such as Kashmir now can hold the world hostage.

## CHALLENGES

The U.S. faces challenges in engaging India and Pakistan in the effort to resolve their disputes. They have yet to comply with most past agreements, from the UN accords of 1948 to the Simla accords of 1972.<sup>xxvii</sup> With the history of animosity and distrust, it is unlikely they will solve the disputes on their own. India’s strategy appears to be to wait for Pakistan’s financial problems to erode its warfighting capability (and for the U.S. to pressure Pakistani concessions). Conversely, Pakistan appears to expect the U.S. and China to pressure concessions from India. In the center are the Kashmiri peoples, many of whom are dissatisfied with both regimes and desire autonomy.<sup>xxviii</sup> Notwithstanding the recent agreements and confidence-building measures,<sup>xxix</sup> long-term resolution will require negotiating and addressing the interests of India, Pakistan, *and* the political entities in both regions of Kashmir.

Compounding these security challenges are India’s aversion to international involvement and Pakistan’s reluctance to comply with the commitments its international involvement

requires. India succeeded remaining non-aligned throughout the Cold War, avoiding the entanglements that security relationships and aid agreements would have wrought. Following the Cold War, India retained its historic aversion to entanglements resulting from alliances or trade agreements. This aversion is cooling in the wake of its blossoming economic power, but remains a cultural, if not political, force. For example, a 1997 investigation of Indian governmental and cultural leaders on the subject of the Kashmir dispute showed opinions that “international involvement ... always brought its won agenda, its own ulterior motives. ... The United Nations could play absolutely no useful role ... The United States is not seen by either side as neutral.”<sup>xxxix</sup> U.S. engagement in India must accommodate India’s need for independence from international influence.

Conversely, Pakistan appears to seek international involvement, but has a checkered record for meeting the commitments this involvement incurs. As early as 1954, Pakistan received U.S. military aid in defense against potential Soviet aggression. However, the U.S. assured India that these arms would not be used against India in aggression. Rather these arms were a condition of Pakistan’s commitment to Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a collective defense organization against Soviet aggression. In the 1960s, Pakistan violated both stipulations of this aid. In 1965, U.S. arms were brought to bear against India in the second Kashmir war. As well, Pakistan was the only SEATO country that did not contribute in any way to the Vietnam conflict.<sup>xxxi</sup> Similarly, Pakistan received U.S. aid throughout the 1980s, some of which it channeled to the ‘freedom-fighters’ conducting insurgency in India-controlled Kashmir. To this day, Pakistan continues to welcome international involvement *IF* that involvement would be to bring pressure against India.<sup>xxxii</sup> U.S. engagement must consider Pakistan’s willingness and ability to meet its commitments.

India and Pakistan both face challenges in resolving internal unrest over low-economic development, political oppression, and human rights violations that inhibit the U.S. government’s ability to offer support. Pakistan is emerging from its financial crises of the 1990s, but is still a “low-income country” due to problems of extreme poverty and underdevelopment.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Much of its internal unrest erupts in undeveloped regions where a lingering feudalism compounds other ethnic hostilities, such as in the Sindh.<sup>xxxiv</sup> India is further developed economically. However, “economic growth is constrained by inadequate infrastructure, a cumbersome bureaucracy, corruption ... and high fiscal deficits.”<sup>xxxxv</sup> Much of its internal unrest results from perceived imbalances in the economic development. For example, internal Kashmir unrest is due, in part, to the perception that India has discouraged development of the Kashmir economy.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Solving internal unrest in both states requires addressing economic issues.

Political oppression and human rights abuse has also caused unrest in both states. Pakistan has flopped between military dictators and ineffective elected officials for years. The seizure of power by General Musharraf in 1999 halted the democratic processes, isolating disaffected groups. Elections have since resumed, but the U.S. Department of State has described these processes as “deeply flawed.”<sup>xxxvii</sup> Compounded with military and police abuse, prison conditions, and exiled political rivals; these conditions serve to further agitate unrest. India has a better record of democracy both at the national and local level. However, its repression of unrest in regions such as Kashmir, to include murders, excessive use of force, and unjustifiable arrests<sup>xxxviii</sup> compounds its internal problems.

In addition to governmental oppression and abuse, both states suffer cultural conflict that divides the government and results in human rights abuses. In Pakistan, Islamic radicals foment unrest and violence on a level bordering insurgency and terrorism (hence the safe harbor Al-Qaida finds). These radicals can affect the government, such as the attempted assassinations of President Musharraf. In addition, the clash between the Sunni and Shi’ia has resulted in violence, such as the Sunni bombings of a mosque and police facility in Quetta.<sup>xxxix</sup> Likewise, the Indian government must carefully navigate deeply ingrained cultural hostilities such as the caste system, which not only represses some castes to the level of slaves (i.e. the Dalit – “untouchables”) but also yields caste violence, especially towards women and children. In addition, India suffers rifts between Christians, Muslims and Hindus that generates hostilities. These rifts can be officially sanctioned (such as by the state government of Gujarat which prosecuted Muslims more harshly than Hindus in the riots of 2001-2002), though most are by radical religious groups (such as several Muslim groups that threatened violence to Muslim women who did not wear burqas).<sup>xl</sup> These human rights issues challenge U.S. engagement as they temper the options available under U.S. law, and under good moral conscience.

## OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to resolving the above threats, the U.S. has an unprecedented opportunity to improve U.S. security and economic prosperity through improved relations with India and Pakistan. In security, a stable and friendly Pakistan and India will provide a counterbalance to the regional powers of China, Russia and Iran. As well, stability in these two states will provide a basis for future stability in such neighboring states as Afghanistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. In economic prosperity, India has the world’s 12<sup>th</sup> largest economy with a growth rate of 8%<sup>xli</sup> (compared to 3.6% for the U.S. in 2003<sup>xlii</sup>). As mentioned above, this growth is unequal across the country which fosters unrest due to perceived imbalanced

development (such as between the more developed South and the less-developed North and East). As a growing economic power, India will prove to be a major economic force in the future, as well as a regional power, if the development can be more equitably distributed. This profound growth provides substantial investment opportunities to the U.S. and a potentially powerful trading partner.

## **ANALYSIS**

Determining a U.S. strategy involves developing prioritized strategic regional objectives based on national interests and identifying U.S. capabilities to meet these objectives. Critical to this analysis is considering past strategies and their success or failure. Notwithstanding the various articulations of national interests in present and past U.S. policy,<sup>xliii</sup> the U.S. Army War College national interests model of Security, Economic Prosperity, and National Values provides the best model for identifying and organizing interests overall. The rubric of vital, important, and peripheral priorities is useful in prioritizing interests, and thus their subordinate objectives. The priority of an interest (and thus subordinate objectives) enables U.S. strategists to determine what risk and instruments of national power the U.S. will accept to pursue each concern.

## **NATIONAL INTERESTS**

South Asia involves the full spectrum of U.S. interests, from Security to Economic Prosperity to National Values. Security interests involve protecting U.S. citizens and property from threats, which include terror, nuclear conflict, drugs, and other powers seeking hegemony (such as China and Russia). Security interests typically involve 'survival' concerns and are normally vital (highest priority). Economic Prosperity interests involve fostering conditions to enhance U.S. fiscal goals and include objectives such as regional stability, bilateral relationships, free markets and trade, and internal stability. While some economic concerns may involve 'survival,' most are fungible or negotiable. Thus economic prosperity interests are normally important (next highest in priority). Finally, National Values interests involve promoting fundamental U.S. values of democracy, human rights, freedom from suffering. National Values interests rarely involve the 'survival' or even 'well-being' of the U.S. Thus National Values interests can range from important to peripheral in priority. The U.S. has strategic objectives with regard to all of these interests in South Asia.

## STRATEGIC SECURITY OBJECTIVES

To protect U.S. citizens and property (the vital security interest), the U.S. must combat terror, prevent nuclear conflict, interdict drugs, and balance regional great powers. The regional objective of Counterterrorism addresses the immediate threat to security<sup>xlii</sup> and contributes to another strategic objective of regional stability. Non-Proliferation and Promotion of Regional Stability are the next two objectives addressing a more long-term threat to the U.S. security – nuclear war.<sup>xlii</sup> The potential for proliferation poses a danger to the U.S. of nuclear conflict across the globe and requires safeguarding the existing materials and preventing a regional arms race. The potential for conflict to escalate to nuclear war also endangers the globe and requires efforts to stabilize the region and address the underlying regional conflicts. The objective to Counter-drug threats addresses a less immediate, though long term, threat that continues to plague U.S. security and regional stability. Finally, Partnering with India is an important objective exploiting the budding great power status of India<sup>xlii</sup> to potentially balance any threats China and Russia may pose. While supporting a security interest (that of countering great power threats), this objective falls to the priority of “important” since U.S. support for this objective would certainly fall short of war ... that is, unlike the former objectives, the U.S. would limit the power the brought to bear on this objective. While the U.S. could certainly support economic and political measures, and even peaceful military partnerships, it would not risk hostilities for this objective.

## STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OBJECTIVES

To foster and support the U.S. economic prosperity interests, the U.S. should foster regional stability, bilateral relationships, internal stability, and free markets and trade. The objective of Promotion of Regional Stability contributes to all portions of U.S. interests to include security and national values. Thus, it is a vital concern and of highest priority of the economic objectives, as it is a fundamental prerequisite for economic growth. As President Clinton observed, regional stability affects “U.S. economic interests in a region that contains one-fifth of the world’s population and one of its most important emerging markets.”<sup>xlii</sup> The objective to develop Bilateral Economic Relationships ranks second in importance, both to stabilize Pakistan and India internally and benefit from India’s budding economic power. It is primarily an important concern. Similar to regional stability, Enhancing Internal Stability provides a major basis for security and national values, though it directly contributes to the important interest of economic prosperity in stabilizing the economies. Finally, the objective to Foster Free Markets and Trade directly contributes to the important economic prosperity interest as it fosters the

growth and development that both enhances internal stability as well as promotes prosperity of all partners in trade and investment.

#### STRATEGIC NATIONAL VALUES OBJECTIVES

Promoting U.S. national values involves many levels of objectives from literacy to hunger to religious freedom to economic system ... most of which would rarely involve major U.S. government direction and intervention and are thus peripheral. Those National Values objectives rating higher in priority typically also contribute to higher national interests. In South Asia, the priority (important) objectives contributing to national values interests involve the objectives to foster democracy, address human rights, and abate human suffering. Fostering Democracy is an important objective that “is central to long term stability”<sup>xlviii</sup> that supports economic prosperity interests and the other national values objectives. This concern is primarily an objective for Pakistan and the Kashmir region, as Pakistan is still recovering from the coup of 1999 and Kashmir remains an oppressed region under (effectively) martial law. The objectives of Human Rights and Human Suffering contribute both to internal and regional stability. The U.S. recognizes that both governments work to safeguard rights and abate the sufferings of their peoples and thus it should be less likely to intervene. However, those instances where India or Pakistan overstep their legitimate authority or fail to prevent suffering only serve to destabilize the region and spawn further conflict. Thus, the U.S. must develop a strategy to work with the states in the region to resolve these problems.

#### STRATEGIC MEANS

B.H. Liddell Hart suggests “the end must be adjusted to the means.”<sup>xlix</sup> That is, even a great power such as the U.S. must recognize it cannot apply endless resources to its interests. Identifying the available diplomatic, economic, information and military means shapes the possible strategies.

#### DIPLOMATIC MEANS

Though dedicated diplomatic means may be small, the U.S. enjoys many diplomatic channels to affect the issues in South Asia. A relatively small diplomatic corps (only 5000 persons world-wide) limits the talent the U.S. can devote to South Asia alone, but many diplomats are skilled negotiators who will be valuable in both India and Pakistan. Another avenue open to the U.S. is partnering with neighboring countries to pressure or assist India and Pakistan to resolve their problems. For example, China, Singapore, and Thailand could join



their diplomatic efforts to the U.S. In the same respect, the U.S. could appeal to regional organizations such as ASEAN and SAARC<sup>i</sup> to provide diplomatic unity of effort. Finally, the U.S. can pursue the concerns through the United Nations to provide global unity and legitimacy. Through such bilateral, regional or international venues, the U.S. can provide both its good offices and political pressure in support of strategic objectives without putting either Pakistan or India in the position of appearing directly under the influence of the U.S. These efforts must be sensitive to both Pakistan's and India's reticence to outside pressure in recognition of their cultural and political need for perceived independence.

#### ECONOMIC MEANS

As a strong economic power, the U.S. can influence this region through aid, regulatory actions, investment, and (if necessary) sanctions. The U.S. is a major source of aid in both India and Pakistan, providing \$130.2 million<sup>ii</sup> and \$1 billion<sup>iii</sup> (respectively) in 2003. As well, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have both provided aid as a result of U.S. support. However, the U.S. aid budget is relatively low, which limits to what extent the U.S. can resolve problems with a grant. Regulatory actions provide greater opportunities to influence the region. With a stroke of the pen, the U.S. can remove trade barriers, encourage private investment, and encourage long-term growth. For example, the CIA attributes Pakistan's retreat from economic collapse in 2001 to "generous foreign assistance and renewed access to global markets"<sup>iiii</sup> (that is, U.S. and UN aid, in addition to a U.S. waiver of sanctions). While the U.S. federal budget has limits, regulatory action can spur private investment which can far exceed any federal contributions. Another opportunity is investment of U.S. capital in South Asian development. Currently this occurs in government-to-government loans.<sup>liv</sup> However, loans always involve the subsequent problem of international debt management. Rather, the U.S. could pursue sponsoring (that is, underwriting) investment in U.S. corporations operating in South Asia, or directly in South Asian corporations. (A caution, this direct investment strategy could run a risk of perceived mercantile imperialism and is thus a two-edged sword.) Finally, especially in regard to Pakistan, the U.S. can pursue the negative means of sanctions. While India's rapidly growing economy is less susceptible to sanctions, Pakistan (as demonstrated in the CIA attribution above) is vulnerable.

#### INFORMATION MEANS

The information world offers a vast, largely untapped means to influence interests in South Asia through information outreach and the development and use of intelligence venues.

The past U.S. involvement in South Asia (reviewed in the Risks paragraph below) has fostered distrust in the U.S. not only from the governments but the people as well. This distrust, which impacts the viability of the other means (diplomatic, economic, military) is the first target for information operations. It is the prerequisite for addressing the other objectives, also through information means. Ultimately, the “information objective” that supports the strategy to achieve the strategic regional objectives is fostering better understanding of U.S. motives and intentions.

The two information means available to achieve this objective are outreach and development of intelligence. In outreach, the U.S. could pursue various venues to enhance the buy-in of the people. Simplistically in the past, information venues have been limited to media advertisement blitzes. But other venues exist, especially through U.S. workers in the region: Non-Government Organizations, educators, religious, medical personnel, and so forth. Further, the U.S. could use friendly regional contacts (business, military, governmental, etc.) to promote understanding. Finally, thousands of South Asians study and work in the U.S.; the U.S. can target this group to build relations and communications. On the intelligence side, the U.S. could build contacts (especially through Human Intelligence) to better understand the dynamics of the region and better inform the strategy by which it pursues its strategic regional objectives.

#### MILITARY MEANS

The inherent distrust of foreign militaries in South Asia limits the usefulness of military means outside of direct (and uninvited) intervention. Thus, the U.S. should limit military means to such activities as military-to-military contacts, foreign internal defense support, and potentially Peacekeeping forces. Past military-to-military activities, such as a “bilateral Defense Planning Group, joint exercises, and military exchanges have greatly increased security cooperation.”<sup>iv</sup> An example is the series of Malabar exercises, combined U.S.-India maritime interdiction exercises emphasizing anti-piracy and counterterrorism.<sup>vi</sup> Further, foreign internal defense support in both Pakistan and India could enhance their abilities to stabilize internal conflict while safeguarding human rights. Peacekeeping forces (through the UN) are also potential resources for monitoring and observing a negotiated peace in such regions as Kashmir. Conventional or covert forces are a possibility, but a high-risk endeavor. Even if invited in, these forces could alienate both the government and populace.

#### RISKS

Examining past U.S. strategies provides a useful analysis of the risks of potential strategies. Historically, the U.S. has moved from strategies of disengagement to courting favor

with Pakistan to partnerships with both nations. The lessons from each strategy should shape today's strategy.

From 1947 through 1950, then from 1965 to 1979, and in the 1990s, the U.S. pursued a strategy of disengagement.<sup>lvii</sup> This strategy was necessary to some degree given the U.S. preoccupation in other areas of the world and other national priorities. However, it also served to allow conflict to fester and animosities to grow. These periods also coincide with major periods of hostilities in the states (three of the four wars previously mentioned occurred in these periods). As recently as 1999, major hostilities erupted and nuclear war loomed from the inability of an economically desperate Pakistan and internationally isolated India to resolve their differences alone. The lesson today is: India and Pakistan will not solve the conflict alone ... isolationism will only perpetuate the conflict.

With the outbreak of the Korean War, the U.S. courted Pakistani support in Asia through military and economic assistance and a formal alliance. This support alienated India throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. Ultimately it funded the Pakistani efforts in the 1965 war which further alienated India. The lesson today is: the U.S. cannot afford to pursue a strategy that appears biased or promotes a military solution. It will foster the distrust mentioned in the Information paragraph above and minimize U.S. influence in the region.

Finally, the U.S. pursued partnerships with both nations in the 1980s and since 2001.<sup>lviii</sup> As a result, when hostilities loomed in 1989 and in 2001, the U.S. was able to mediate a reduction in hostilities. The lesson today is, while the U.S. may not be able to solve the problems for South Asia, our prior engagement enables our assistance when the crisis occurs – it keeps us relevant.

## **COURSES OF ACTION**

Rather than propose limiting either/or courses of actions to policy-makers, this paper provides a suite of options for the U.S. to address its interests in South Asia. Following the prior conclusion that the U.S. strategy must engage with both countries in a balanced, non-militarized course of action (per the lessons from the Risks paragraph above), the facets of this strategy include supporting and cultivating a negotiated peace, building balanced bilateral relations, engaging neighboring state support, and direct pursuit of security.

Most of the strategic regional objectives involve resolving the internal and external conflicts in the region. Resolving these conflicts will require more than military might. Dr. Rast argues that “force by itself cannot bring about conflict resolution” but rather resolution requires all parties to commit “to continued negotiations.”<sup>lix</sup> As such, resolving conflict in this region

requires a negotiated peace. The U.S. strategy should cultivate this negotiated peace. First, the U.S. should commit to offering venues of mediation for the negotiations. As neither country desires or can politically survive the perception of U.S. interference,<sup>lx</sup> the U.S. should also pursue bilateral, regional, and international venues for its good offices and political pressure (per the Diplomatic Means paragraph), but should never leave the nations in doubt of its support for the ultimate peace. Indeed, the two underlying keys for U.S. engagement must be *long-term commitment* and *low-key* to both reassure our partners and to protect their independence.<sup>lxii</sup> To support the negotiations, the U.S. should next pursue all the economic means available to include tying aid, regulatory actions, and investment to continued commitment and *progress* in negotiations. Past aid and regulatory actions have occurred to promote vice reward progress toward peaceful solutions. This policy must change for two reasons: (a) once in receipt of the support, the two states no longer have incentive to pursue further changes, and (b) to make real concessions politically palatable with their populations and home governments, negotiators need tangible gains to show for the losses ... monetary support provides those gains. For example, former congressional staffer Devin Hagerty recommends a combined U.S., U.N., E.U., and/or Japan revitalization package to rebuild Kashmir in the wake of a negotiated settlement to sustain the peace.<sup>lxiii</sup> Finally, military means are possible through an offer of peacekeeping forces to monitor such regions as Kashmir. However, the U.S. should recognize that these forces will probably be unwelcome unless truly multinational and unaligned. India and Pakistan are still distrustful of the interference of the Great Powers, but may be open to the support U.S. can provide to their own efforts if they can maintain the perception of nonalignment and independence. The 2004 negotiations between Pakistan and India are the most promising step toward resolution, but still appear to stall over the Kashmir issue.

Given the economic prosperity and security related objectives in the region, the U.S. should build balanced (unbiased) bilateral relations with *both* states. The U.S. should invest key skilled diplomats into positions of influence (such as the embassies). Continuing to pursue military-to-military contacts will further develop the bilateral relations, but a key opportunity would be to use these contacts in the nuclear management field to enhance nuclear surety (perhaps through exchanges in locations such as Cheyenne Mountain – a strategy already pursued with Russia) and to enhance transparency (a key arms control goal). By involving British, French, and/or Russian support in these exchanges, the U.S. can appeal to the desire of both nations to be considered members of ‘the nuclear club.’ Shared intelligence in SOUTHCOM’s counterdrug program is a model for supporting counterdrug, counterterror, and counterinsurgency operations in the region. Offers of Intelligence-Surveillance-Reconnaissance

assets (and even human intelligence) may build internal stability. Finally, as with the conflict resolution above, aid, investment, and regulatory actions can enhance these relations and build trade partnerships (though these should not undermine the conflict resolution efforts).

The stability of India and Pakistan is not limited to those two nations, but rather the U.S. must look across Asia to unite efforts to resolve conflict, build economic prosperity, and safeguard national values. Engaging with neighboring states such as China, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Singapore, and Bangladesh, the U.S. can build a coalition of supporters who can aid India and Pakistan in their efforts for internal stability and conflict resolution. The U.S. should consider the strategies concerning other conflicts affecting the regions (such as the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka and the Maoists in Nepal) and how efforts to resolve those conflicts compliment efforts in India and Pakistan. Finally, the U.S. should look to regional organizations and the UN to provide assistance in negotiations, economic development, and conflict resolution.

Ultimately, the U.S. must accept that India and Pakistan may not resolve their conflict and that the threats of this region require unilateral action. While this option is not exclusive of those above, it carries a greater risk of alienating South Asia and the rest of the world. The U.S. could build a covert human intelligence network in these countries. It could conduct covert counterterror, counterdrug, counterinsurgency, and even counter-WMD operations to directly eliminate threats. The U.S. could explore employing sanctions against either country to pressure counterproliferation and conflict termination demands. Finally, the U.S. could directly intervene (through conventional invasion) to resolve the conflict. All of these unilateral activities carry internal and external costs (in dollars, people, equipment, and credibility) and risks; as such, the U.S. should only pursue these actions as a last resort and when the vital interests come under direct assault by either the actions of the nations or by the complete inability to prevent the actions of the people under them.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The U.S. should cultivate negotiations, balanced bilateral support, and regional engagement. Past U.S. support to negotiations has been crisis response<sup>lxiii</sup> or detached (offering its 'good offices' but not pushing).<sup>lxiv</sup> The U.S. must go further to encourage the overtures both countries have made this year – an opportunity too fortuitous to waste. The recent developments in bilateral relations offer opportunities to regain lost trust. Given President Bush's focus on counterterrorism in Pakistan and recognition of India's coming great power status,<sup>lxv</sup> now is the time to cultivate these relations to build permanent partners. Notwithstanding President Bush's reticence to yielding 'power' to international alliances, the

U.S. should cultivate the regional coalitions necessary to achieve peace, prosperity and democracy. Building these partnerships not only increases the resources and influence, but it also addresses other conflicts and problems in the region.

The option the U.S. should not pursue at this time is unilateral action. The risks and the costs (in capital and lives) are high and the chances of success are low. This option should await catastrophic failure of the other three options. Ultimately negotiations, balanced bilateral support, and regional engagement will safeguard U.S. interests in India and Pakistan and address the threats, challenges, and opportunities.

WORD COUNT: 5994



## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> For the sake of simplicity, this paper will continue to discuss Kashmir as a whole. This region actually contains separate sub-regions: Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, Aksai Chin, and the Northern Territories; each sub-region containing several multi-ethnic provinces. The central sub-regions of dispute are Jammu and Kashmir.

Open war occurred in 1947 (the first Kashmir Crisis – ended by a UN-brokered peace) and in 1965 (the second Kashmir Crisis – ended by a Soviet Union-brokered agreement: the Tashkent Agreement). In 1972, India's support of the Bangladesh independence fight led to fighting between Pakistan and India, some of which spilled over into Kashmir. This war ended with a bilateral peace agreement between Pakistan and India, the Simla Accords, which recognized the Line of Control through Kashmir. The last major armed battle in Kashmir occurred in 1999 (the Kargil Crisis), which ended with a U.S.-brokered cease-fire. Other large scale skirmishes also occurred in the mid-to-late 80s as well as late 2001/early 2002. Many authors discuss these conflicts in depth:

Louis Hayes, *The Impact of U.S. Policy on the Kashmir Conflict* (Tucson AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1971), 16-34.

Sumit Ganguly, *The Kashmir Question – Retrospect and Prospect* (Portland OR: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd, 2003), 1-5.

Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir – Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 14-163.

<sup>ii</sup> Hayes, 42.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid, 46-48.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid, 26 & 29.

<sup>v</sup> Thornton mentions the strain between India and these nations over these issues. He suggests that this is a dynamic in the bilateral relations between India and each.

Thomas Thornton, "India's Foreign Relations: Problems along the Borders," in *India Briefing*, 1988, ed. Marshall Bouton and Philip Oldenburg (Boulder CO: The Asia Society, 1988), 57-58.

However, I suggest this dynamic goes further and could result in drawing in some or all of these other countries into a major regional conflict in the future. Certainly Marks suggests that Nepal's dependence on India for jobs and counter-insurgency support has earned the animosity of the Maoist insurgents. A conflict at the right time involving the right issues could bring about a major change in Nepal and even embroil northern India.

Thomas Marks, *Insurgency in Nepal* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 3, 6, & 20.

<sup>vi</sup> The source of the internal conflict relates directly to the "divide and rule" policies of the British empire. Louis Hayes touches on the concept of the "divide and rule" source of the conflict, but mainly from the perspective of the British using minority leadership to govern unrepresented regional populations. Hayes, 14.

However, the policy extended much further. The fact that the British kept a majority of the India/Pakistan region separated into 550 princely states (independent of each other and dependent on Britain only for international affairs) served to preserve a degree of independence that lasted up to independence in 1947. 'One-India,' then, is a relatively new phenomenon. The depth to which this policy pervaded the politics and affected the regional tensions surfaces in



study of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, from which the British perceived lessons and actions demonstrate this policy ran much deeper than separating leaders. The use of non-native sepoys forces to both maintain control and to redirect regional antagonism was a strategic move to ensure native hostility focused at other ethnic groups vice the British.

Dr. Niranjana Khilnani, *India's Road to Independence 1857 to 1947* (New Delhi, India: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1987) 20-21.

vii Thornton, 59.

viii Library of Congress, *Country Study – India* (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1995), available from <[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+in0203\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+in0203))> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

ix Marks, 8.

x Library of Congress, *Country Study – Pakistan* (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1994), available from <[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+pk0177\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+pk0177))> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

xi Reuters, *Bomb Kills Five Pakistani Troopers in Tribal Area*, (Reuters News Service, 27 Sep 2004), available from <[http://abcnews.go.com/wire/World/reuters20040927\\_92.html](http://abcnews.go.com/wire/World/reuters20040927_92.html)> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

xii Thornton, 59.

xiii Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Briefing on the 2004 Indian General Elections: The Road Ahead* (Washington DC: CSIS, 7 June 2004), 2, available from <<http://www.csis.org/saprog/040607summary.pdf>> Internet; accessed 30 Dec 2004.

xiv Ibid, 2.

xv Ibid 3.

xvi Devin Hagerty, "U.S. Policy and the Kashmir Dispute: Prospects for Resolution," In *The Kashmir Question – Retrospect and Prospect*,. Ed. Sumit Ganguly (Portland Oregon: Frank Cass, 2003 (originally from India Review, July 2003)), 103.

xvii Marks, 20.

xviii Christine Rocca (Asst. SecState for South Asian Affairs), *U.S. Counterterrorism Policy for South Asia*, (Washington DC: Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittees on Asia and the Pacific and on International Terrorism, Noproliferation, and Human Rights, 29 Oct 2003), available from <<http://www.state.gov/p/sa/rls/rm/25738.htm>> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

xix Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – India* (Washington DC: CIA, 2004), available from <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/in.html>> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xx</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – Pakistan* (Washington DC: CIA, 2004), available from <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pk.html>> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ashley Tellis, C.Christine Fair, and Jamison Medby, *Limited Conflicts Under the Nuclear Umbrella* (Santa Monica CA: RAND, 2001), 49.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>xxiii</sup> It may be argued that Pakistan's unofficial doctrine is to use nuclear weapons as a last resort, that is in the case of "national survival" such as a possible overrun of Islamabad. If so, realities suggest this distinction is of little significance. Ashley Tellis suggests that national survival in Pakistan is little different from regime survival, a tenuous concept throughout Pakistan's history and certainly threatened by even minor setbacks such as an unfavorable development in Kashmir.

Ashley Tellis, "Smoke, Fire, and What to Do in Asia," *Policy Review No. 100*, (Washington D.C. Apr – May 2000), available from <<http://www.policyreview.org/apr00/tellis.html>> Internet; accessed on 30 Dec 2004).

However, Pakistan has yet to promulgate an official doctrine and appears primarily concerned with deterring Indian power on most fronts. Indeed General Khalid Kidwai, Head of the Strategic Plan Division of the Pakistan's Army (the division in charge of the nuclear arsenal), has stated:

"Nuclear weapons are aimed solely at India. In case that deterrence fails, they will be used if

- a. India attacks Pakistan and conquers a large part of its territory (space threshold)
- b. India destroys a large part either of its land or air forces (military threshold)
- c. India proceeds to the economic strangling of Pakistan (economic strangling) [e.g. blockade]
- d. India pushes Pakistan into political destabilization or creates a large scale internal subversion in Pakistan (domestic destabilization)"

Paolo Cotta-Ramusino and Maurizio Martellini, *A concise report of a visit by Landau Network - Centro Volta 1 Internet*, (Como Italy: Landau Network [an Italian Arms Control Institute], 11 Feb 2002) available from <<http://lxmi.mi.infn.it/~landnet/Doc/pakistan.pdf>> Internet; accessed on 30 Dec 2004.

That is, Pakistan maintains its nuclear weapons as a counter to India's conventional superiority and may threaten nuclear first-use to counter even perceived Indian support of Pakistani internal conflict that threatens the regime.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Anthony Corsdesman, *The Threat of Pakistani Nuclear Weapons* (Washington DC: CSIS, 2001), 2

<sup>xxv</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions*, (Washington DC: CIA, Jul – Dec 2003), Attachment A, available from <[http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/721\\_reports/july\\_dec2003.htm](http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/721_reports/july_dec2003.htm)> Internet; accessed on 30 Dec 2004.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Hagerty, 104-105.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Of positive note, the two have worked productively to resolve Indus water rights over the last 40 years (since the original dispute erupted in 1965 over the Rann of Kutch (Hayes, 29). Most recently, the two states agreed to a Joint Survey of the Sir Creek region in the Rann of Kutch to support the negotiations to resolve this border dispute.

Chinaview, "Pakistan, India to Define Maritime Boundary," Chinaview, (Beijing China: Xinhua News Agency, 15 Dec 2005), Available from <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-12/15/content\\_2339010.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-12/15/content_2339010.htm)> Internet, accessed on 30 Dec 2004.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Kashmir Study Group, 1947 – 1997 – *The Kashmir Dispute at Fifty: Charting Paths to Peace* (New York NY: The Kashmir Study Group, 1997) 26 and 47.

<sup>xxix</sup> India and Pakistan began a series of negotiations in Feb 2004 that continue to this day. Given the continued cease-fire along the Kashmir Line-of-Control and concurrent talks between India and the Kashmir groups, this series of talks appears to bode well. However, the talks have danced around the most troublesome point: Kashmir. Indeed, as late as 5 Sep 2004, the negotiators still "remained far apart on the central dispute of Kashmir."

Reuters, *Kashmir Rivals Look for Progress* (Reuters News Service, 5 Sep 2005) available from <<http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/asiapcf/09/05/India.pakistan.talks.reut/index.html>> Internet, accessed on 10 Sep 2004.

<sup>xxx</sup> Kashmir Study Group, 29-30.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Hayes, 39-41.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Kashmir Study Group, 47.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, *Background Note: Pakistan* (Washington DC: DoS, No date), available from <[www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3453.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3453.htm)> Internet, accessed on 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan* (Washington DC: DoS, 2003), available from <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27950.htm>> Internet, accessed on 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, *Background Note: India* (Washington DC: DoS, 2004), available from <[www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3454.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3454.htm)> Internet, accessed on 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Kashmir Study Group, 22.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan*, no page.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – India* (Washington DC: DoS, 2003), available from <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27947.htm>> Internet, accessed on 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan*, no page.

<sup>xi</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – India*, no page.

<sup>xlii</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, *Background Note: India*, no page.

<sup>xliii</sup> Department of Treasury, *Financial Report of the United States Government* (Washington DC: Department of Treasury, 2003), 16, available from <<http://fms.treas.gov/fr/03frusg/03frusg.pdf>> Internet, accessed on 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xliiii</sup> For example, the 2002 National Security Strategy states the following national interests which can be organized in the war college model: Security includes defeat global terrorism, preventing attacks, defusing regional conflicts, and transforming security institutions; Economic Prosperity includes global economic growth (and free markets/trade); and finally, National Values includes human dignity, open societies, building democracy and develop cooperative action (among great powers).

George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. (Washington DC: The White House, September 2002), 1-31.

Other articulations such as Asst Sec Rocca's testimony on Interests and Foreign Policy in South Asia list specific interests in relation to South Asia, but which also can be organized in the same rubric: Security includes regional stability, counterterrorism, and non-proliferation; Economic Prosperity includes stabile economies, trade partnership, and sustainable development; and National Values includes Islamic democracy (for Pakistan), addressing poverty, addressing extremism, and addressing human suffering, Indeed, Asst Sec Rocca states the overall interests to be a "peaceful [security], democratic [values], and prosperous [economic] region."

Christina Rocca, Assitant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, *United States Interests and Foreign Policy Priorities in South Asia*, (Washington DC: Statement before the House Committee on International Relations, 22 Jun 2004), available from <<http://www.state.gov/p/sa/rls/rm/33774.htm>> Internet; accessed 2 Oct 2004.

<sup>xliiv</sup> Rocca, *US Counterterrorism Policy toward South Asia*, no page.

<sup>xliiv</sup> William Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (Washington DC: The White House, December 2000), 60.

<sup>xlii</sup> Bush, 27.

<sup>xlii</sup> Clinton, 60.

<sup>xliiii</sup> Rocca, *United States Interests and Foreign Policy Priorities in South Asia*, no page.

<sup>xlix</sup> B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New York NY: Penguin Books), 357, in U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy. *Readings Vol III: War, National Security Policy, and Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks PA: 2004), 33.

<sup>i</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

<sup>ii</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, *Background Note: India*, no page.

- <sup>lii</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, *Background Note: Pakistan*, no page.
- <sup>liii</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – Pakistan*, no page.
- <sup>liv</sup> Example, India's external debt was \$112 billion in 2003. Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, *Background Note: India*, no page.
- <sup>lv</sup> Rocca, *United States Interests and Foreign Policy Priorities in South Asia*, no page.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Indo-Asian News Service, "India, U.S. to Carry Out Marine Commando Exercise," *Yahoo! India News* (New Delhi, India: IANS India Private Limited, 20 Nov 2003), no page, available from <<http://in.news.yahoo.com/031120/43/29164.html>> Internet, accessed 2 Jan 2004.
- <sup>lvii</sup> Hayes, 33-34.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Hagerty, 98-99
- <sup>lix</sup> Dr. Vicki J. Rast, *Influences on Termination Policy in the Persian Gulf and Bosnia* (Maxwell AFB AL: Air Command and Staff College, 2000), 21 and 28.
- <sup>lx</sup> Kashmir Study Group, 26 and 47.
- <sup>lxi</sup> Hagerty, 110.
- <sup>lxii</sup> Ibid, 111.
- <sup>lxiii</sup> For example in 1989 and 2001. Ibid, 98 and 105.
- <sup>lxiv</sup> Ibid, 102-103.
- <sup>lxv</sup> Bush, 10.

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